The New Year 1938-39
By Joseph Goebbels

We are at the close of the most successful year in the history of the National Socialist government. It is rather strange how hard it is to find the right words for the events of the past year. Everyday language is not enough to express what we feel in this emotionally festive hour, to say what moves us so deeply.

There is no doubt that the year 1938 was unique in German history. It fulfilled a thousand-year dream of the German nation. The Greater German Reich has become reality. All other political events pale before this historical fact. Other events may be important, but in comparison they are but of passing interest. The return of over ten million Germans to the Reich is an event of historic significance that goes far beyond the year. It will affect the most distant future. Things are happening all too quickly. The years are filled with dramatic events. They are so exciting and intense that we sometimes are not able to appreciate them individually. Hardly is one political problem resolved and along comes another. We often fail to be thankful enough to our age and to ourselves. Given the rapid pace in which history is happening, we incline all too easily to forget the difficulties that were involved. We can easily consider the government's successes as obvious, things that had to be. If last year we had a harvest of unprecedented size in our barns, we can easily believe that it was the result of political good fortune and a kind of historic wonder.

Of course, a certain element of luck is involved in historical successes, and the sheer scope of the Führer's success does seem miraculous. But the kind of luck we are having is the kind that, as Moltke once said, is enjoyed only by those who work for it. The historic wonder we are experiencing is one of those wonders that are mysterious and inexplicable in their totalities, but are brilliantly clear in individual events. As long as we are speaking of wonders, it is worth asking why the National Socialist government has been granted with wonders, but not its predecessors. The most incredible thing about wonders is that they always come when one does not simply wait for them, but works and fights for them. That is what has happened here. The Führer did not bring about the wonders of 1938 by waiting for them. He gathered and organized the strength of the nation and used it courageously. It paid off. There was certainly risk involved. Without big risks, history never grants big

successes. This is further proof of the saying that the world belongs to the brave.

It is characteristic of historic wonders that they seem almost impossible until they happen, and when they happen, it sometimes looks as if it had been easy. It is therefore no great thing to recognize a historic wonder that has happened. One must believe in ones yet to come. That is the important thing about the big historic events of the past year. The people did not waver during the difficult tensions that were involved, and had to be involved. The broad masses of the people have a primitive and incorruptible ability to believe that everything is possible and reachable if one devotes one's full energies and fights with a strong and courageous heart.

This ability to believe is rather weak in some circles, above all in those with money and education. They may trust more in pure cold reason than a glowing idealistic heart. Our so-called intellectuals do not like to hear this, but it is true anyway. They know so much that in the end they do not know what to do with their wisdom. They can see the past, but not much of the present, and nothing at all of the future. Their imagination is insufficient to deal with a distant goal in a way such that one already thinks it achieved. They were also unable to believe in the victory of National Socialism while the National Socialist movement was still fighting for power. They are as little able today to believe in the greatness of our National German future.

They perceive only what they can see, but not what is happening, and what will happen. That is why their carping criticisms generally focus on laughable trivialities. Whenever some unavoidable difficulty pops up, the kind of thing that always happens, they are immediately inclined to doubt everything and to throw the baby out with the bath water. To them difficulties are not there to be mastered, but rather to be surrendered to. One cannot make history with such quivering people. Thankfully, they are only a thin intellectual or social upper class, particularly in the case of Germany.

They are not an upper class in the sense that they govern the nation, but rather more a fact of nature like the bubbles of fat that always float on the surface of things. Today, they seek to give good advice to National Socialist Germany from abroad. We do not have to ask them for it. They focus all their energies on the small problems that always are there, complain about the cost and believe that crises and unavoidable tensions are on the way.

They are the complainers who never tire of bringing National Socialist Germany before the so-called court of world opinion. In the past, they always found willing and thankful followers. Today, they only have a few backward idiots in their camp.

The people want nothing to do with them. These fools are the 8/10 of one percent of the German people who have always said “no”, who always say “no” now, and who will always say “no” in the future. We cannot win them over, and do not even want to. They said “no” when Austria joined the Reich; they said “no” when the Sudetenland followed. They always say “no” as a matter of principle. One does not need to take them all that seriously. They do not like us, but they do not like themselves any better. Why should we waste words on them? They are always living in the past and believe in success only when it has already happened, but then waste no time in claiming credit for it.

The people want nothing to do with these intellectual complainers. The year 1938 was filled with great and sometimes unnerving tension. But they are delighted at the close of this year with the Führer’s great historical successes. This people are once more happy about life. Never before has there been such a happy Christmas as that of a week ago, and never before have we looked forward with so much confidence and courage to a New Year as we do to 1939. It is always hard to bid farewell to a year. Each year has many joys and sorrows. Each has its high points and low points. We would not want to miss a single year of our lives.

It has never been as difficult, however, to bid farewell to a year as it is to the year 1938. It was a splendid year, crowned with victory and success, a year without equal. The ten million Germans who returned to the Reich feel this above all. They join us for the first time in celebrating the New Year.
A year ago, they gathered in dark cellars and blacked out rooms to listen to the radio as I gave the political report for the year. The voice of the nation reached them as they sat in the prisons or concentration camps that Austrian clericalism, with its pure Christian neighborly "love" had established. They could do nothing but long for the Reich.

Now they are part of the great German fatherland. They sit in their rooms and dwellings. They are surrounded by comfortable warmth and are filled with pure and cheerful joy. They are united with us. For the first time, 80

million Germans of the great German motherland join in celebrating the New Year.

I take pleasure in this festive hour to send over the radio the last greetings of the passing year to all from Flensburg to Klagenfurt and from Aachen to Tilsit. We 80 million Germans are united in this great Reich in the center of Europe. We have a common fatherland and serve common national goals. In these last hours of the old year, I greet Germans everywhere. I greet the Germans in the Reich. I greet the Germans throughout the world, in foreign countries and in distant continents. I greet the Germans on the high seas. And in the name of countless millions of Germans I send our common greeting to the Führer. Never were our wishes for him heartier and deeper than in this hour. We thank him for the Greater German Reich that is now a reality. Only his courage, his steadfastness, his actions, and his nerves made this great wonder possible.

It has been six years since we gathered with him at the end of 1932 at the Obersalzberg. It was at National Socialism's gravest hour. The movement had experienced a depressing electoral loss and many had begun to lose faith in ultimate victory. Those who always live in the past were saying that Hitler's star was sinking. More than ever, however, we believed in him and in his strong and unshakable belief in the greatness of the Reich and the historic mission of the German people. Because he believed so firmly and unshakably, the Greater German Reich has become reality.

Today we once more join with him in this strong and unshakable belief in the greatness of the Reich and the historic future of the German nation. Loyal and unshakable, we trust this man and his historic mission, and will do everything to ensure that his orders will always find a ready and determined people. The year 1938 has been the most prosperous year in Germany's history. May it be followed by a New Year also filled with success and victory! May it bring our land and its people blessing and good fortune! I greet all Germans, above all those who in the past year carried the heaviest burdens, deprivations, sorrows, and responsibilities. You have the thanks of the fatherland.

May our people and Reich be eternal, and long live the Führer!